

LAKE BREEZES

ARTHER WILLIAM FISHER



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Lake Breezes

BY

ARTHUR WILLIAM FISHER



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**TO THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER**

PREFACE

Ever since childhood I have listened to the story-laden breezes as they wafted over the shore, landward or lakeward, depicting as they passed the beauties of nature, or recounting the thoughts and deeds of men. Charmed though I have been with their murmurings, I have not always been able to interpret or record them, and such records as I have are but jottings or sketches, yet to the sympathetic spirit they may prove the needful suggestion to the fuller and clearer original.

The three stories, "Fishin'," "Wadin'," and "Huntin'," are supposed to have been spoken by a small, kindly disposed but somewhat venturesome boy who likes to relate his experiences.

In the verses entitled "The Spirit of Poetry," the poetic spirit in general is represented as a youth singing in the night, yet hopeful for the day when poetry will be more widely read and better appreciated.

The "Double Red Cross Poems" are thus named because their subject, alcohol, is one of the most prolific of the secondary causes of consumption.

CONTENTS

LAKE BREEZES	PAGE
SUNSET ON THE LAKE	1
BREAKERS ON LAKE ONTARIO	6
A CALM ON LAKE ONTARIO	8
THE MOON'S WEDDING	11
FISHIN'	14
WADIN'	17
HUNTIN'	20

LAND BREEZES	
THE MARKED APPLE	25
THE HUMMING BIRD'S VISIT	27
SUNSHINE IN SHADOW	29
TO A YELLOW BIRD	31
THE LEAF AND THE BLOOM	34
OUR FIRST THANKSGIVING	36
A CHILD'S FOOTSTEPS	37
THE SPIRIT OF POETRY	40
A MOTHER AND HER BABE	42
THE SCARECROW	47
DRUM TAPS	50
THE WITHERED FLOWER	52
A WAYSIDE FLOWER	54
THE CHIMES OF CORNELL	56

DOUBLE RED CROSS POEMS	
TO REVEREND SAM SMALL	61
JIM'S FIRST DRINK	62
THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE	66

SONGS OF LABOR

PAGE

THE MASTER MASON	75
HANS SACHS	77
A SONG OF THE FORGE	79
THE DRIVING PLANE	82
A SONG FROM THE PLOW	84
APPLE BLOSSOMS	87
GATHERING APPLES	89
THE ORCHARD IN WINTER	92

LAKE BREEZES

SUNSET ON THE LAKE

OFF in the stilly eve,
While creeping shadows weave,
 I watch the sky.
To see, as darkness lowers
With the increasing hours,
 The clouds sail by.

Afar off in the west,
I like to watch them best,
 O'er wimpling lake;
The sun there, glowing red,
Dips down his fervid head,
 His thirst to slake.

Like distant, snow-capped heights,
Bathed in those radiant lights
 Of golden hue
That tinge with Alpine glow
Cragged Switzer's caps of snow,
 Appears the view.

The vivid colors glow
In an expanding bow
 O'er fleecy clouds;
While lower sinks the sun,
The limpid liquids run
 Like winding shrouds.

The varied pigments spread
From violet to red
 Before my eyes,
And paint with penciled streams
That magic land of dreams
 In gorgeous dyes.

Oh, could I but combine,
With Turner's art divine,
 The hues that flow ;
Could I the picture spread
In Milton's lines instead,
 The world might know !

The rising cloud-heads stand
Like mounts in fairy land,
 With peaks aglow ;
And on their sides the trees
Shake in the balmy breeze,
 With plains below ;

While up the valleys wide
There streams a roving tide,
 A warlike host !
Oh, list the sounds afar !
The battle peal of war !
 A nation lost !

The smoke of wavy blue
Is changed to livid hue !
 Back comes the band !

Lo, see the raging fire!
A conflagration dire
Sweeps o'er the land!

The flame now leaps and sags
Like hosts of battle flags
Tossed on the air,
When o'er the rampart goes
An army in the throes
Of wild despair!

While still the conflicts wage,
And leaping fires rage
On every side,
The storms arise on high,
And, sweeping through the sky,
Smite far and wide!

Now tints of every hue
Shoot through the eternal blue
To cloudy flake,
And streams of feebler light
Assail the drawing night
On land and lake.

That waving, glimmering band,
Like a protecting hand,
Lies on the flood;
And for the beating sail,
Its kindly works avail
To quell the feud.

Far o'er the waves they reach,
Unto the pebbly beach
And jutting piers;
Those struggling, straggling streams
From that bright land of dreams,
Allay our fears.

And now o'erhangs the east,
To swell the brilliant feast,
The twilight arc,
A rosy tinted bow,
Reflected sunset glow,
Hovering earth's dark.

And sometimes I have seen,
Arching the rising e'en,
A rainbow bright,
When closed a sultry day
With welcome shower's play
And clearer night.

But lo! now sinks the sun;
The strong old monarch's done;
He sheathes his glove;
His round and chubby face,
Like globe of molten glass,
Sinks on the wave!

Yet, like the warrior bold,
Who, dying, keeps his hold
Upon his bow,

A parting shot he slings,
As o'er the sky he flings
The afterglow.

Again the golden light
Transforms the murky night,
And tints the sky
With green and yellow and red
O'er all the cloudy bed
That floats on high.

Now darkness comes apace
To fill the awful space,
A somber pall!
And with the dingy bars,
The moon and silvery stars:
Night shadows all!

BREAKERS ON LAKE ONTARIO

ALL the eastern sky is brightening
With the glory of the sun,
While with timid streams of lightening
Now the waves are overrun!
Gleam! gleam! gleam!

Roll they onward, ever shoreward,
With a vast, unceasing roll;
Comb they downward, ever inward,
Proud and hoary reach their goal!
Roll! roll! roll!

Dashing onward, dashing forward,
Up against the rocky shore;
Dashing inward, dashing backward,
Far into the rocks they gore!
Dash! dash! dash!

Splashing upward, splashing skyward,
Like the screaming gulls they soar;
Splashing landward, splashing seaward,
With foul turbulence and roar!
Splash! splash! splash!

Break they now, and, backward hurling,
Gnash their teeth in angry foam!
Forward, and again they're curling,
On, in seried ranks they come!
Break! break! break!

Wheel the sea-gulls soaring, soaring,
With their peevish, piercing cry;
Yonder, sailors tossing, tossing,
Scan the shore with eager eye!
Toss! toss! toss!

Moans the wind more hoarsely, hoarsely,
Till the setting of the sun;
Beats the waters fiercely, fiercely,
Till the waves still higher run!
Blow! blow! blow!

Sighs the night wind howling, howling,
While a "boom!" breaks on the air;
Soars the rocket screaming, screaming,
Pierces through the wild despair!
Whir! whir! whir!

Runs the life buoy outward, shoreward,
Passing o'er the conquered waves,
Through the storm wind, through the breakers,
Till the crew's last man it saves!
Save! save! save!

Once again the morning's breaking,
Finds the wreckage on the shore;
Still the surging waves are dashing,
But the sailors toss no more.
Wash! wash! wash!

A CALM ON LAKE ONTARIO

FAR to eastward, far to westward,
Far as human eye can reach,
There's no ripple on the waters,
There's no wave laps up the beach.

In the deep vault of the heavens
Floats no cloud of livid hue;
Floats no bird on tireless pinions
Far into the unknown blue.

Now the lake lies in a slumber,
Resting from his fitful storm;
He betrays nowhere a signal
Of his yester writhing form.

Like a wild beast now he's sleeping,
Peacefully he lies at rest;
He's no longer tossing, heaving;
Not a motion stirs his breast.

Here and there upon the water
Sits a duck or errant gull,
Peering with a curious quaintness
At a twin-like phantom foul;

Or, perhaps, with cunning glances,
Through the limpid waters cast,

Sees the pebbles on the bottom,
Or the boulders, brown and vast.

In and out among the boulders
Dart the fish in playful glee,
Heeding not their fearful watchers,
Sailing there all silently.

Now they nestle in the tree-tops,
Mirrored in the roving tide;
They indulge an envied fancy
Which in nature is denied.

In the dim, uncertain distance,
Juts a headland from the shore,
Bathes its feet in cooling waters,
But it dares not venture more;

Or, yet farther from the waters,
Bends the haze about a wood,
Veils it in a misty background
With a glorious sisterhood.

Strayed and wandered are the sisters,
All along the plashy shore,
Wreathed in a fantastic garland,
Even as it was of yore.

Out upon the lake's broad bosom
Lies an idly flapping sail;

Idly lies, nor wind nor motion
Does its onward course avail.

Thus the water lies in stillness
Till the cooling evening breeze
Rises, ruffles on the surface,
Flutters in the border trees.

THE MOON'S WEDDING

SLOWLY the sun, descending,
Had parted with the day;
Slowly the tall shades, wending
Timorous o'er the bay,
Quaking and darkly fingered,
Had ever bolder grown;
No more the sun elves lingered;
They all had meekly flown.

High midst the clouds of heaven
Arose the silvery moon,
Seeking the faithful seven;
And then almost as soon,
Faint in the far off distance,
The twinkling of a star
Sent forth its bright assistance
In gilded chariot car.

Back o'er the shimmering waters
In reverential fear,
The woodland witch's dark daughters
Contemned their nobler peer;
Back 'neath the border bushes,
Back to the reedy fen,
They slunk among the rushes,
Down to their horrid den.

Bright with the dancing streamers,
The tiny wavelets flow;
As bright, two youthful dreamers
Their moonlit journey go
Along the rippling river,
Upon the joyful lake,
Where fairy moonbeams quiver
In many a feathery flake.

Sprightly the oars are dripping
With brightly beaming pearls;
Gay o'er the waters skipping,
The happiest of girls.
Oh, hark! the lark is singing!
Hear ye the nuptial tune?
She's now with laughter ringing!
Oh, merry month of June!

They seek the bright reflection
In trailing garments white;
The moon, his fair election,
The lake shall wed to-night;
By hosts she comes attended,
But far the loveliest she
Of all the welkin's blended
Bright bands of minstrelsy.

Now tramp the holy marchers
In stately bright array,
As move the gleaming archers

Silently up the bay ;
They hold their proud dominions
O'er land and sea and air,
Nor rest their golden pinions
Till wed the native pair.

Then straight the youthful lovers
Are homeward gaily sped
Ere when the weird witch hovers,
Slow and painful and dread ;
Ardent their hearts are burning,
By tender fancies fed ;
Eagerly they are yearning
The day when they shall wed.

FISHIN'

I've been watchin' clouds dis mornin',
An' dey're cumin' from de west;
When de win' cums down a-whoopin',
Den's when I likes fishin' best;
An', you bet, we're goin' a-fishin',
Bill an' me an' brudder Dan,
Fur I've got a lot uv bait-wurms
In dis ole termater can.

I jus' likes ter go a-fishin'
When de win' is blowin' so;
But de bugs on dese pertaters
I mus' git befor' I go —
Dare's dat gobbler! pesky nigger!
Spreads his tail out like a fan!
Guess I'll t'row 'im out sum bait-wurms
From dis ole termater can.

I kin never pik dese bugs off
Till de sinkin' uv de sun;
All de time dat gobbler's cumin';
Den I takes my heels an' run.
Guess I'll leave dese ole pertaters,
Wid deir bugs an' turkey clan,
Take my pole an' rigglin' bait-wurms
In dis ole termater can.

Don't like lickin's much, I tell yer;
Billy says dey're lots uv fun;
I can't see it all de samey,
'Specially when my luck is run;
Makes 'im dance, I notice, allus,
When 'e gits de ole rattan;
Den 'e never t'inks uv fishin'
Wid dis ole termater can.

But I guess, when no one's lookin',
I'll steal roun' dat apple tree;
Dare's de place (I'll 'member it allus!)
Where de ole buck cum fur me!
Bill an' me were goin' a-fishin',
But de fence I couldn't scan —
Gee! you'd ought ter heard de clatter
Uv dis ole termater can!

T'rough de orchard an' de wood lot,
Bill an' me, we had to steal;
All de same, we went a-fishin';
Got t'ree bull'eads an' an eel;
Den we t'ought we'd go a-wadin'
In de crick where I could span;
Pulled our stockin's off an' hid 'em
In dis ole termater can.

Since den I ain't been a-fishin',
'Specially in a drizzlin' rain,
'Cause when I cum back a-drippin',

Sumhow I can't quite explain;
But de world is growin' older,
An' sum day I'll be a man;
Den I guess I'll go a-fishin'
Wid dis ole termater can!

WADIN'

ONE warm afternoon las' summer,
When de win' was blowin' hot,
I went down to go in wadin'
Wid anudder little tot.
Mudder tol' me not to spatter,
'Cause I'd get my clo'es all wet,
But, sumhow, when I am wadin',
I most allus will ferget.

Fer a long time we were busy
Diggin' wells into de sand,
Skippin' stones, an' makin' houses,
Writin' names upon de strand;
Den we rolled our pants up higher,
Waded up an' down de shore,
An' we run an' splashed de water
Up behind an' up before.

Well I know I hadn' ought to,
But when Joe went splashin' by,
Seemed as dough I mus' splash higher,
An' de water's never dry;
So we both jus' splashed our bestest,
As we broke into a trot,
An' de harder we kept runnin',
Why, de wetter we both got.

Den we waded in de water
Jus' de furdest dat we dared,
Till de water cum up higher
Dan we eider uv us cared;
An' I can't explain, but sumhow
I jus' slipt, an' down I sat;
Joe, he laft, an' called me "lubber,"
So I pushed him right down flat.

Den we both were in a pickle,
An' we almos' had to cry,
So we t'ought we'd go in swimmin'
While our clo'es were hung to dry;
But dere was no tights or bat'-ouse
Fer a feller in distress,
So de bushes giv us shelter,
An'— why, nature giv de dress —

Gee! I never t'ought uv lookin'
If de wimin might be round!
Had dey caught us, golly wilkin!
I would sunk into de ground! —
But we skipped into de water,
An' we got behind a tree,
So if mudder came a-huntin',
She would have to hunt, by gee!

So we kept under de water,
Or our clo'es we'd skip an' try,
But it seemed de more we tried 'em,

Dat de slower dey would dry ;
So de next time I go wadin'
Wid de udder little chaps,
I will put my clo'es to dryin'
Jus' before dey're wet, per'aps.

'Cause strange t'ings are apt to 'appen
If a fellér does ferget,
An' he splashes in a-wadin',
An' 'e gits 'is clo'es all wet ;
Fer 'is mudder's sure to know it,
Dough 'e t'inks 'e dried 'em well,
An' de way she makes 'im 'member
Den, I guess I needn' tell.

HUNTIN'

WHEN I was a little feller,
Oh, it's awful long ago!
When de green leaves all turned yellor,
Most a year, I guess, or so,
Nick an' me an' Bill axed mudder,
Den went huntin' in de wood.
(Nick's my dog, an' Bill's my brudder;
Took 'em 'long to keep 'em good.)

Bill's a big boy, an' 'e's older,
So when we went on a hunt,
He could carry on his shoulder
De ole gun dat made me grunt;
Den de big game, squirrels an' rabbits,
Stopped an' looked an' turned an' run;
Billy knew most all deir habbits,
An' 'e popped 'em wid de gun.

Once I saw a chipmunk peepin'
From behind a beechnut tree;
Now I knew 'e wasn't sleepin'
From de way 'e winked at me;
But you bet dat I felt bigger
When I laid across a stump
De ole gun, an' pulled de trigger —
Whew! I got de biggest bump!

Billy said de gun was ready
For de rabbits an' such game,
So I held 'er good an' steady,
But she kicked me jus' de same;
Bruised my finger, cheek an' shoulder,
An' she knocked me good an' flat;
But de chipmunk was not bolder,
For I got de worst of dat.

Hit 'im? Well, per'aps I couldn',
But de way I made 'im run
Ought to make 'im know 'e shouldn'
Ever wink into a gun.
Billy almost died wid laughter,
But I guess he didn' know
How a feller feels right after
He's been out a-huntin' so.

Den I saw a diver swimmin'
On de lake, right near de shore,
So I sent de shot a-skimmin'—
But 'e dove, jus' like before;
Guess 'e must 'ave seen me blinkin'
After I had aimed de gun,
For 'e dove in just a winkin';
Seemed as dough 'e liked de fun.

Soon I saw a rabbit jumpin'
T'rough de bushes to de road,
So I waited for de t'umpin'

Billy give anudder load.
How dat rabbit went a-bobbin'!
Den 'e'd stop an' look aroun',
Just as you 'ave seen a robin
Look, an' hop along de groun'.

Maybe you will t'ink it's funny,
An' I'm willin' dat you should,
But I couldn' shoot dat bunny,
As 'e hopped along de wood;
So I called de leetle feller,
But 'e pricked his ears, an' run;
Yet I know dat I should beller
If I'd hurt 'im wid dat gun.

So no more I'm goin' a-huntin'
For de bunnies wid a gun,
'Cause I'm sure to git a buntin',
An' I don' much like de fun;
An' besides I've been a-t'inkin',
Ever since dat huntin' day
When I saw dat chipmunk winkin',
Dat for him it wasn' play.

LAND BREEZES

THE MARKED APPLE

ALONG a dusty country road
Came two small boys one autumn day;
Each with his slate and book, a load,
They often stopped to look or play.

The tempting dust their bare brown feet
In clouds sent flying in the air,
Until the boys that were so neat,
Came into school a dirty pair.

The school bell rang; they took their seat;
Then each one from his pocket drew
A fine red apple, large and sweet,
And a sly glance at the teacher threw.

The morning's work had well begun,
And each was busy with his task,
When little Ben, the older one,
"Swap apples, Joe?" was heard to ask.

The trade was quickly made, and then,
To make the victory more secure,
With furtive glances, elfin Ben
Quick bit his apple to the core.

With mouth so full of luscious taste
The juice bedribbled to his chin,

The naughty Ben, in fearful haste,
Had set the whole school in a grin.

The teacher from his work looked up,
And, with an ill sustained grace,
Straight asked the errant "little pup":
"Why, Ben, what ever ails your face?"

Rubbing the floor with his bare toe,
While big tears fell from drooping head:
"We traded apples, me an' Joe,
An' I just marked mine, sir," he said.

THE HUMMING BIRD'S VISIT

It was a sprightly humming bird
That skipped from flower to flower,
And sipped the golden nectar sweet
Within the fragrant bower,
While dallying summer breezes bore
Their perfume in a shower.

'Twas round among the flowers I spied
The gaudy little thing;
His throat was banded red and white,
A dainty green his wing;
But all in vain I waited there
For him to light and sing.

Into the scented rose he dove,
And the nasturtiums red;
He wooed the honeysuckle coy;
The aster turned her head;
She hardly thought his throbbing wings
Would give him time to wed.

The dahlia gave approving nods;
She thought them nicely paired;
The fuchsia lent a happy smile;
The larkspur hardly cared;
When love-in-a-mist he dropped and kissed,
The stocks stood still and stared.

The lily turned quite pale with fear
Lest he should pass her by;
And near a lady's slipper watched;
A tear stood in her eye;
But when he came and went, she blushed,
And heaved a parting sigh.

He stooped to kiss a pansy prim;
Up went her pretty face;
Then to her daisy friend she turned,
To borrow her fine lace,
Should such a handsome chap return
A lover to the place.

He went around again to each,
As does the parting swain;
Then jealous Zephyr blew the maids,
And blew and shook amain;
But still they turned their heads, and said:
"We hope you'll come again."

SUNSHINE IN SHADOW

BACK from memory's ancient halls
Come the thoughts of other times,
When we bartered duty's calls
For the poets and their rhymes.

Often through the silent gloom
Of those halls so dark and drear,
Shines as from an inner room
One lone picture passing dear;

Shines and glows in darkest hours,
Shedding forth its radiant light,
When the tempest round me lowers,
When the noonday seems as night.

Still I see that gentle smile;
Still those blue eyes twinkle down;
From all cares they yet beguile;
Never do they wear a frown.

Ever as the way grows dim,
Those kind eyes in ambush hide,
Peering through their dusky brim,
Cheer me on, and never chide:

Even now, in later years,
Come those eyes so bright and fair,
As I saw them through my tears,
Yonder morning, on the stair.

And I watch their sparkling bloom
Through the memory's ebbing sway,
As in blinding tears they come,
And in tears they float away.

TO A YELLOW BIRD

I SEE thee, little songster true,
Out in the old plum tree,
Thy pretty cap and golden hue,
As handsome as can be.

The beauteous plumage of thy breast
Is thy deserved gain;
It marks the tenor of thy nest,
And swells the happy strain.

I see thee, little yellow bird,
And hear thy gladdening song;
No note of love that I have heard
So cheers the world along.

I hear thee warble out thy praise
Of bird and beast and bee,
And hear them joyful peans raise
In love returned to thee.

To thy fine art teach me the way
That I may join the throngs,
And bring to thee in humble lay
What praise to thee belongs.

From bird or beast or lonely flower,
From nature's myriad throats,

Didst thou not learn the wondrous power
That hovers in thy notes?

Or is it thy reflection fair
In every living thing,
That brings to thee contentment rare,
And makes thy heart to sing?

'Tis not the stress of busy life
Excites thy throbbing brain;
'Tis not the care of toil and strife
Compels thy sweet refrain.

Oh, no, my little bird, I know
The fount of thy unrest,
For on that old, bent plum tree bough
I see thy brooding nest.

And there thy mate among the leaves
Cares for thy little ones;
And oh, what care to them she gives!
From thence thy wondrous tones!

From thence and from her love to thee
And thine to her, O bird,
Must come those songs more glad and free
Than I have ever heard.

Thou sing'st to her of the world around,
And to the world of her,

Until the winds with songs redound,
And mutual love confer.

I hear thee at the morning light,
At noontide and at eve,
Singing the way of life and right,
That men may better live.

I hear thee through thy daily life;
No cavil of right and wrong;
With all the world thou hast no strife,
Thou happy might of song.

O noble bird, how in thy life
A precious boon was given,
To calm in men their passions rife,
And make of earth a heaven!

I bless thee, little songster dear,
That in the old plum tree
Thou cam'st to dwell by the window here,
And sing thy songs to me.

Oh, come thou nigh us every year,
And sing thy songs so gay;
So fill the duller days with cheer,
And drive the cares away.

THE LEAF AND THE BLOOM

WERE I the leaf
And thou the bloom
Upon the tree,
In space more brief
Would there be room
For you and me?

O sweetest breath
Of morning air
That comes from thee!
No sound of death
For happy pair
Like you and me!

I wonder now
If, far away,
A bird's sweet song
Should reach this bough,
Would its charmed sway
The hour prolong?

No love like thine,
That fills the air,
Needs birdie's song
To sweet entwine
Enraptured pair,
Or hold it strong.

Come, then, my love,
In purest bliss
I greet thee here,
'Mid smiles above,
With sweetest kiss
Of all the year!

Oh, happy hour,
When Love departs
From his fair throne
To seek the bower
Of kindred hearts,
And make them one!

OUR FIRST THANKSGIVING

WHEN the summer days are over,
And the fields have lent their spoil,
We in grateful memory ever
Turn to harsh New England soil,
Where in weary, hopeful watching,
On a wild and foreign strand,
Singing, praying, clearing, planting,
Dwelt the little Pilgrim band.

We have heard how in the autumn,
Thankful for the garnered grain,
For the birds and beasts of forest,
For the fishes of the main,
They observed a joyous feast-day,
Storied Plymouth Rock beside,
With the redmen and their chieftain,
Massasoit, the true and tried.

We have heard through sequent ages
How the little band has thrived;
We have heard and seen with wonder
What a blessing they've contrived;
But in doubtful moments only,
When dull clouds bedim our way,
Do we honor fully, truly
That, our first Thanksgiving Day.

A CHILD'S FOOTSTEPS

I WALKED abroad one winter day,
When piercing blasts blew chill,
And drifting snow filled up the way,
And circled round the hill.

Some rustling leaves might still be seen
Hovering around a tree,
And as they shook and flew between,
A shiver ran through me.

As through the street I wandered on,
Though bleak the wind did blow,
I saw the way a child had gone,
From footprints in the snow.

I followed to the graveyard gate,
And on among the stones;
I hastened, ere it be too late,
Whence came some sobbing tones.

A little girl scarce six years old
Sat crouching on the ground,
And by her side, with ample fold,
A cloak lay o'er a mound.

“ My little girl what do you here
In such a bitter storm? ”

I asked, nor could restrain a tear
At this sweet childish form.

And as I took her in my arm,
And wrapt the cloak around
To shield her from the tempest's harm,
Her simple grief I found:

“O sir, it is so cold today,
And mama's all alone,
And when the wind blew through this way,
I thought I heard her moan.

“They told me, when she went away,
She would come back again;
But I have watched most every day,
Through all the snow and rain;

“And when to-day she did not come,
Her large, blue cloak I found,
And started with it from my home
To lay it on her mound.

“My papa says that in the spring,
When 'way up in the tree
A little bird begins to sing,
She may come back to me.

“O sir, can you not tell me true
Where mama dear has gone,

And why she leaves the whole day through
Her little girl alone? ”

I sighed, and stroked her sobbing head,
Until her grief had flown ;
I could not answer, “ She is dead,”
For I had wiser grown.

Who is so wise that he can tell,
When parents coldly lie,
The meaning of the tolling bell?
Fond hope: they cannot die!

Or who will tell to blooming youth,
With life full flowing, free,
The doubtful, stern, unyielding truth,
That we but mortals be?

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

DEEP in the silent shades of night,
When slumber spreads her drowsy might
 O'er hill and plain,
I hear a voice both sweet and clear,
Attuned unto a finer ear,
 Pour forth its strain.

I listen to the spirit's swell
Reverberate from mount to dell
 And back again,
Till charmèd rocks provoke the air
With subtlest music, soft and rare,
 With their refrain;

Like gifted Orpheus's tuneful lyre,
Whose tender tones won Pluto dire
 From wrathful wrongs;
And stayed the rocks of falling steep;
And lulled the monsters of the deep,
 And sirens' songs.

He sings and sings until his notes
Resound as from a thousand throats
 In love and praise
Of nature in her manifold
Endearments to the singer old
 Of "Works and Days."

Oft do awakened beasts arise,
And raise their voices to the skies,
 As they rejoice;
And heaven and earth are rocked to hear
The concord of the general cheer
 For that clear voice.

Though wild and clear its music runs,
Scarce mortal ear within the suns
 Can it compel;
The ancient minstrel's wandering grace,
That swayed with song the infant race,
 Hath lost its spell.

Yet sing, brave youth, thy wondrous song
Shall full and free its notes prolong
 O'er desert earth,
Till dawning light of other days
Shall reawaken for thy lays
 A nobler birth.

The time shall come when men will turn
Back to the heart that now they spurn,
 To hear its ring;
When song and gladness shall prevail
O'er carking care and misery's wail;
 Then sing, youth, sing!

A MOTHER AND HER BABE

O MOTHER with thy prattling boy,
In that sweet baby's birth
Thou hast the highest, purest joy,
That ever comes to earth.

The cooing laugh, the dimpled smile,
That o'er and o'er again
Reflect thy happy face the while,
Assuage the child-birth pain.

With willing feet and cheerful hands
Unwearied tasks are done;
They are but pleasures he demands,
The helpless little one.

To feed, to dress — a thousand cares
Are needed all the way;
To fill with love his many prayers
Makes up the happy day.

To nourish, foster and to bless,
More than all else are thine,
With love and faith and tenderness,—
A labor most divine.

To guide his ways, to train his mind,
Be thine especial care;

His future fortunes thou shalt find
That thou canst make or mar.

To him the ministrations now;
To thee, in future years,
When wrinkled face and silvered brow
Compel the manhood tears.

To thee his mind will ever turn,
As type of thine own sex,
When youthful dreams his soul shall burn,
And tender questions vex.

Be, then, thy gentle ways his guide,
Though rough the path of life;
The home, thy one, essential pride,
The tender, loving wife.

Nor let the frets of social strife,
Its tale of rights and wrongs,
Disturb the tenor of thy life
With false and slanderous tongues.

To play the man is not thy part,
If thou wouldst happy be;
But act most nobly what thou art
Unto eternity.

Two orbs of light control the day
In glorious majesty,

Each in its well appointed way
Transforms the murky sky.

Should nature, as a favored boon,
Transpose their 'customed light,
The million suitors of the moon
Would make of day a night.

Sometimes from her enchanted bow,
The perfect and the fair
Essays the realm of day, but lo!
The stars desert her there!

To flee the glare of blinding light,
Her misty veil she tries;
Back to her ancient halls of night,
A fairer being she flies.

The stars again receive their queen;
Though oft deceived before,
They pledge to her their brightest sheen,
Whom lover stars adore.

Like as the sun and moon revolve
To make the perfect day,
The man and woman must resolve,
And nature's law obey.

Thy mother's heart will ever turn,
When these teased questions come,

To where the fires of life shall burn,
To boys and girls and home.

The nation's guard thou rearest now;
His future works are thine;
A halo bright surmounts thy brow;
Through him thou art to shine.

Cornelia was an honored name,
As knew the Romans well;
She made the worthy Gracchi's fame;
Need I that story tell?

What greater mothers of great sons,
Or swayed more destiny,
Than Lincoln's, Wilson's, Washington's,
Great warders of the free?

Who, then, can tell what destined powers
Are hovering o'er the land,
To guide our nation's darker hours,
Swayed by a mother's hand?

If woman search the whole world through,
By wealth and fame beguiled,
The noblest work that she can do
Is rear a little child.

Is there a man with soul so small,
That in his latest days,

His heart turns not to youth's loved call
With tearful joy and praise?

Hard pressed in life's severest fare,
Where storm is ever rife,
'Tis then he turns for rest and care
To mother, sister, wife.

To him the little flock to feed,
To make a home, is given;
Be hers the finer, lovelier deed,
To make that home a heaven.

THE SCARECROW

THE cherries were ripening daily
In the glow and the heat of the sun,
And the birds were all singing gaily,
For the warmer days had begun.

In the tree-top a scarecrow was standing,
With his old straw hat and his cane;
And the birds there to leave was commanding,
And from pecking the cherries refrain.

His arms o'er his head he was folding
In every gust of the wind;
He was blowing, entreating and scolding;
And yet they would creep up behind.

He would bluster and threaten and worry,
But the birds didn't care much for that;
They would come and peck off a cherry,
Then go straight and perch on his hat.

In the garden two lovers were sighing,
And their plans in low tones telling o'er,
While the fruit of the tree they were eyeing,
And longing for a taste more and more,

Till, at length, 'mong the boughs he was stand-
ing,
And she, with her apron wide spread,

Of the cherries a share was demanding,
Though "No cherries," he teasingly said.

"You promised to give me a portion,
It was only a moment ago,"
She said as a means of extortion,
"I ne'er thought you would pester me so."

Then troubled and humbled in spirit,
He let of the cherries one fall
Down into her apron, or near it,
The brightest and ripest of all.

Down, down from the branches descending,
With his hat with the cherries well filled,
To the lower boughs swaying and bending,
Where the fruit in her apron he spilled.

"Now, you rascal, I've all of your pleasure,"
She in turn so banteringly said,
As she caught in her apron the treasure,
And off to the hammock she fled.

Then down from the boughs lightly springing,
With a skip and a bound and a whirl,
He found in the hammock a-swinging
A snug place by the loveliest girl.

"Oh, 'no cherries' for you, Benny Glover,
Or, at most, only one," as a tease,

She then said to her penitent lover,
“ If you open your mouth and say ‘ Please.’ ”

The old scarecrow winked, and his arms flopt,
And he laughed, and he nodded his head,
As into Bennie’s mouth the “ ones ” dropt;
“ It’s the old, old story,” he said.

DRUM TAPS

“ Tap! tap!” the drums beat warningly
In those dark, threatening hours,
When loudly rang the battle cry,
And clashed the mighty powers;
The roll of drums, the cannons’ roar,
Were heard on every side;
The battle’s flash from shore to shore
Gleamed o’er the ocean wide!

“ Tap! tap!” the drums beat gloomily;
Long raged the awful din;
But burning zeal lit every eye,
Though gallant ranks grew thin;
Yet every heart rejoiced to see,
When late the war was done,
The human soul forever free,
The Union saved in one!

“ Tap! tap!” the drums beat mournfully,
With dirges for the dead;
’Neath all the dome of summer sky
The green-grown mounds are spread;
And all the ranks of Northern Blue,
And all the Southern Gray,
That fought around their standards true,
Are scarred and worn to-day!

“ Tap! tap! ” the drums beat cheerily ;
The nation’s whole domain,
Where’er yon banner floats on high,
Sings now one glad refrain ;
And who shall guard that flag of ours,
On harried plain or wave,
We’ll strew their graves with loving flowers,
And grace our soldier brave!

THE WITHERED FLOWER

ONE happy morn in early spring
I roved beside a wood,
As hither on returning wing
Came a melodious flood.

Through gloomy depths the wild woods rang
In wondrous harmony,
As happy birds their carols sang
Beneath a smiling sky.

They sang of south land's sunny clime,
Of north's bright, golden flowers,
Awoke from sleep in warm springtime
By gently tapping showers.

The laughing flowers danced to see
Their lovers all around,
Singing sweet songs from bush and tree
And e'en the mossy ground.

And as they nestled in the green,
Forth from his winter home,
Began the squirrel with smiling mien
His leafy bowers to roam.

The brooks had from their crystal tent
Joyous broke forth anew,
To wander as their will was bent
Beneath the sky's pure blue.

And as I listened to the song
That floated to my ear,
I strayed the meadow path along,
And to a flower drew near —

A lovely flower that some dull hand
Had broken from its stem;
Now had it graced a smiling land,
Now drooped a rayless gem.

Then as I reached the precious flower,
Whose fragrant breath had flown,
Again I thought of that stern hour
That left me sad and lone,

When like that withered flower I found
(How awful was the truth!)
A fair, bright form cast to the ground
To wither in her youth.

Thus, out upon the world's broad way
We cannot ever tell
The tenure of our earthly stay;
We hope it will be well.

A WAYSIDE FLOWER

O THOU sweet wayside flower,
That in thy hues reflect'st the morning sky,
And waft'st thy perfume to the passer-by,
Thou dost beguile the hour;

And from thy glowing heart,
There, swaying lightly on thy slender stalk,
Thou stand'st in all thy beauty by the walk,
A blessing to impart.

O thou rare treasure dear,
That lift'st thy voice upon the drifting wind,
And pip'st a note of gladness to mankind
That their dull souls may hear!

Upon the desert air
Thou fling'st the essence of thy brimming cup,
And call'st the bird and bee that they may sup
The golden nectar there.

And O sweet flower demure,
That see'st in life naught but the good of men,
Nor count'st it dear, nor canst be glad but when
Thou thrill'st their lives impure.

One happy moment thine
To wile away in love and ecstasy,
Bright gem, and only thou canst tell me why
'Tis offered at love's shrine.

Thou liv'st thy light to give;
And ere thy brightening gleam of life is o'er,
And earth rolls on in darkness as before,
Thy lesson I'll receive.

Not in some clustered bower
Couldst thou have told me of thy love and life,
Or shown to men how idle is their strife,
My precious wayside flower.

THE CHIMES OF CORNELL

RING, oh ring, sweet peal of bells!
How your merry music swells
 With the hour!
Sweep and swell the mellow notes,
Floating from your blended throats
 In the tower!

Ring and chime, ye stately bells!
Send your notes o'er downs and dells;
 Echo long!
Send your voice across the years;
Echo, e'er the wide world hears
 Your grand song!

Nobly ring and sweetly chime
With the rhythmic roll of time,
 Tuneful Bell!
Travelers on the troubled sea
Love the charming melody
 Of Cornell!

Chime and ring, ye famous bells!
While life's light within men dwells
 Youths will all,
From Atlantic's roaring roll
To Pacific's bounding boll,
 List your call!

Ring, oh ring, sweet peal of bells!
As your swaying music swells
 With the hour,
All our hearts rehearse the notes
Floating from your blended throats
 In the tower!

DOUBLE RED CROSS POEMS

TO REVEREND SAM SMALL

Written after hearing Dr. Small lecture on the subject "King Alcohol at Armageddon," at Sodus, New York, May 30, 1915.

THE war against the tyrant Alcohol
Is of the noblest that a soul can wage,
And you, who lead the warriors to engage,
Shall crowned with glory be at last, Sam Small.
Not threats nor wounds from thrice the pistol's
shot
Nor bludgeons' blows, that fell about your
head
And left you fallen, bleeding, limp, as dead,
Have curbed your spirit, swerved your course
a jot.
The road is forward with unyielding fight,
That stretches nation wide, from state to state,
Till conquered lies and slain this foe of men,
And ne'er again his pimps may see the light,
For written on our Constitution great
The clause shall stand that guards each citizen.

JIM'S FIRST DRINK

"ACCURSED drink!" I heard him say,
And closer stepped unto the grate
Of strong walled prison's gloomy cell,
And saw, upon his fatal day,
A prisoner grim that crouching sate,
And brooded in the depths of hell;
And as he neared death's awful brink,
He told the tale of "accursed drink":

"I was a young man once like you;
Bright were the prospects of my life
When fell to me my father's farm;
I wooed a maiden good and true,
And took her for my wedded wife;
Ne'er thought I then she'd come to harm;
Temptation came; I did not think
Of ruin from a single drink.

"Fair fortune filled our lives with joys,
And we were free from grievous cares;
Three children came into our home,
Three fair-haired, laughing, bright-eyed boys;
But troubles come nigh unawares
When father's thoughts begin to roam;
'Tis then his star begins to sink;
That first glass called for one more drink.

“ I stayed the luring call at first,
Nor harkened to the power of sin
That sure as fate came creeping on
With the increasing, burning thirst,
That swept away my will within,
And ere I knew, the tempter won,
And fastened on me, link by link,
The fetter-chain of sin and drink.

“ My manhood, pride and honor, too,
Our farm and all our earthly gain,
My savings all, and hers as well,
Whom I had loved, the good and true,
Went down into the fearful bane
Of drinking, gaming, damning hell,
That opened from the fatal chink
So wily made by that first drink.

“ And her, to whom I pledged my troth
When she was fair and in her bloom,
I left to wander through the earth
To gain scant substance, garments, both,
And shelter, scarce one dingy room,
For self and children, for whose birth
I, thankless, plunged her in this sink
Of loathsome hell by that first drink.

“ Oh, would my horrid tale were done!
But sadder yet: one night I bore
Through streets and alleys, cold and dim,

Unto that garret, sad and lone,
And roughly pounded on the door,
When quick she answered, ' Hello, Jim ' ;
Though scarce her weary eyes could blink,
She saw that I was crazed with drink.

" I rudely asked the scanty wage
That she had earned at labors few ;
Scarce did her mother's love resist,
When, driven by a drunken rage,
My savage greed no boundary knew ;
I struck her with my clenched fist,
And ere my deeds I could bethink,
She lay a victim slain by drink.

" Dead was my love of youthful hour,
Dead was the wife of manhood years,
Dead was the mother of my boys,
Dead, and did no retrieving power,
No wildly wailing flood of tears,
Recall her to her youthful joys —
My memory from the scene would shrink
Of woeful deeds from that first drink !

" My home long since they took away,
My orphaned boys are scattered far,
My young wife lies low in her grave,
Aye, young was she, though care-worn gray ;
None can this evil train debar
Who falls to demon drink a slave ;

These are the woes that ever slink
Into the paths of those that drink!

“The time draws near; my tale is done;
One lone hour more and Jim shall lie
 Within the confines of the tomb!
Oh, boys, hear Jim, leave drink alone!
 My own dear boys, hear father’s cry! —
 Hark! hush! I hear the sheriffs come!
Along these penance walls they clink —
This is the cost of that first drink!”

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE

ALONE I sit, a drunkard's wife,
And have for years and years,
Draining the bitter lees of life
In unavailing tears.

I gave my love and life to one
Who loved the wine-glass more;
Ere was our wedded life begun,
'Twas blighted to the core.

Deceived by drinker's lying tongue
And eke his blandished wiles,
I fell the tangled thorns among
To tread these weary miles.

My youthful fortune and the dream
That filled my girlhood's breast,
Are scattered like the flickering gleam
That flits before the oppressed.

I dreamed a happy home was mine
(Not fortune's store of gold),
And husband's love and children fine
To fill our family fold.

These were the subjects of my thought,
And these my every care,—
A simple home, by nature taught,
And simple, wholesome fare.

But oh, the change! what adverse wind!
Unhappy fate for me!
I have for spouse a drunken hind,
A wreck upon life's sea!

And children? Oh, what cruelty
To bring into the light
A little child with moral eye
So blinded to the right!

A mother's life can know no joys
Whenever she must think
That through inheritance her boys
Are also doomed to drink.

And do our girls escape the snare,
That stamps this awful curse?
Ah! no, they each receive a share
Like to our boys, or worse;

For they must see their children's doom
Unto this awful spell,
And clouds of fear and shades of gloom
Intenser far than hell.

Our little Freddie's fate was kind,
I'm sure I ought to say;
He had a trouble of the mind,
And died an early day;

And Martha, too; I scarcely know
What really ailed the child;
For she it was received that blow
From drunken father wild.

My Richard on the downward road
Already leads his way;
And spite his mother's tearful load
He heeds no pleading stay.

And all my children, would that they
Had ne'er to this been born,
To feel the drink curse's awful sway,
And lead a life forlorn.

I scarcely know the "husband's love"
That filled my girlish mind;
It seemed so like the heaven above,
And even yet more kind.

But oh, the truth! What varied blames!
What oaths! a kick, a blow,
A choking and the foulest names,
Are all the "love" I know!

How poor and scanty is our fare
I cannot even say,
For hunger is the constant share
Doled out from day to day.

Our clothing is the meanest tags,
Cast off by rich and boor,
Or culled from pawnshop's reeking rags,
Or given by the poor.

Our home is but this gaping hut
That ill withstands the cold,
While through the wintry storm blasts cut,
To chill the little fold.

Oh, were this all the misery
Entails a drunken spouse;
Oh, were this tale of wrongs to die
When dies this long carouse!

But woes untold wait wife and child
Beyond his latest breath,
When in his faithless crimes and wild
Disease lurks, worse than death.

My days are full of drudging care,
To earn a little food;
My nights will scarce a moment spare
For my own family's good;

And when I've saved a scanty store,
My heart must often sink
To find, as I have oft before,
It's all been stolen for drink.

Oh, hark! was that the howling wind
Went sighing through the trees,
Leaving its sting of cold behind,
And things like me to freeze?

The wild night shudders; and the blast
That furious drives the snow,
May pierce his staggering form prone cast,
And leave an icy brow.

I'm startled at each sudden noise
That falls upon my ear;
I tremble for my girls and boys,
And fear a mother's fear.

I scarcely know a moment's lull
From dread and boding thought;
So have my aching days been full,
So anxious nights been fraught,

Yet why I tremble know I not;
I'm sure with bated breath,
As respite from this dismal lot,
I've longed and prayed for death.

But mother's love still lifts me up
Above this gloomy plain,
One hope that still my bitter cup
May bitter not remain.

One gleaming ray upon me beams,
Through darkness unalloyed,—
A hope that through the ages streams,
To see the curse destroyed.

The tempter then could hold no lure
To snare unwary boys;
And girls, from trailing stain most pure,
Would crown a mother's joys.

Oh, could the world but know the woes
That fill a drunkard's home;
Could it but realize the throes
That seal its awful doom;

Could judges of the highest law
Our welfare but promote;
Could they but know this dragon's maw,
And see his ugly throat;

Could men of science tell the tale
Disease is working here,
Tell how consumption ghastly pale
Is rampant far and near;

Could God in love look down upon
Our misery and despair,
This curse, that trails from sire to son,
Would vanish with my prayer.

SONGS OF LABOR

THE MASTER MASON

CLINKING, clinking, ever clinking,
O'er the bricks the trowels fall,
While the masters all are thinking
Of the building of their wall.

Higher, higher, ever higher
Still, the bricks mount one by one,
As the work grows ever nigher
To the glory of the sun.

Hark! I hear a master singing
Some old poet's skillful line,
While his busy trowel is ringing,
As it beats a measure fine.

'Tis in times afar and hoary,
Merry England's golden age,
When the tragic muse's bright glory
Gleamed upon fair Fancy's stage;

When from out the dark eternal,
Rang a woodnote, sweet and wild,
From that voice sublime, supernal,
"Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child."

Still I hear the master singing,
Gaining volume in his song,
While his soul its flight is winging,
And its notes are flowing strong.

'Tis the pile of Fame that's building;
And his work is nearly done;
Near a dome of brightest gilding
Shines resplendent as the sun.

Far away the temple's gleaming,
Crowned with brilliant thoughts of men;
Through the ages thine are streaming,
Master mason, "O rare Ben!"

HANS SACHS

IN a quaint old German city,
Many, many years ago,
Sat a cobbler-poet singing,
As his shoes he used to sew;

And his songs were full of sweetness,
Full of lingered tales of yore;
But whene'er he told a story,
'Twas much sweeter than before.

He would sing unto the people,
As he drew his thread of flax,
For the people loved the singer
Of the gentle craft, Hans Sachs.

Oft he sang in simple ditties;
For the artless was his song;
They have sung them and have cherished,
Cherished, and have sung them long.

Oft in higher realms of music,
As the numbers rolled their round,
From the lips of Hans, the cobbler,
Burst a glad, exulting sound;

Or with strains full, histrionic,
Did he check the flight of years,
While he wore his cobbler's apron,
And revolved among his peers.

Early in the morning pegging,
Stitching with a master's will
Shoes that long are past all wearing,
Sang he songs that echo still.

At his bench I see him sitting,
Drawing out his thread of flax,
And his songs the artist singing,
He the cobbler-bard, Hans Sachs.

A SONG OF THE FORGE

With the bright dews of the morning,
When bold chanticleer gives warning
 For the rising of the sun;
Then the smith with busy fingers
Loiters not, nor lately lingers,
 Till his morning's work's begun.

Fast the forge and faster blowing,
Till its sooty throat is glowing,
 Where the flaring embers play;
Spits and hisses out a flurry
Of bright sparks in wonted hurry
 For the labor of the day.

Lo! the stubborn iron is heating,
While the blacksmith is entreating
 With his coaxing pat and poke,
Till, at last, the glowing member
Leaves behind the lagging ember,
 With its curling, wavering smoke.

Now the hammer's shrilly ringing,
And the master's gaily singing
 To the music of his blow,
While the fireflies in a shower
Thick the sturdy smith embower
 In their momentary glow.

Thwack! thwack! thwack! the anvil's pealing,
Till the air around is reeling,

With the sharp, vibrating sound,
And the ear in sorrow's yielding,
While the tingling blows are wielding,
For the master's song is drowned.

Still the iron is brightly burning,
While the smith is turning, turning
To the rhythm of his song,
Till with many a pound and hammer,
With its loudly ringing clamor,
Steady blows the heat prolong.

Finally the heavy ringing
Ceases with the artful swinging
Of the wonder-working sledge;
Thus are shaped in fullest measure
Works for labor, works for pleasure,
E'en the weight-defying wedge.

Then with tempering, fitting, filing,
Piece with piece thus reconciling,
Till the fabric's made anew;
Strength and beauty so uniting,
Bend and break by deftly righting,
Brings the master into view.

Thus with ceaseless round of toiling,
Ne'er from duty once recoiling
In his field of labor wide,

Works the smith with broad endeavor,
Giving and receiving favor,
Till the fall of eventide.

THE DRIVING PLANE

I SEE the timbers piling high,
And o'er the beams the men glide by,
 As they erect a dextrous proof
 Against the sunshine and the rain
 In many a corner-gullied roof;
Nor dizzy heights they seem to fear,
Though far below they faintly hear
 The swish-swish of the driving-plane!

The busy hammers ever ply,
As up against the mottled sky
 The sloping rafters in a row,
 Adroitly fitted with a gain,
 Are joined with timbers down below;
And through the hive like linking cells,
A busy murmur ever swells,
 As nimbly sweeps the driving plane!

I hear the busy rush of saws,
Their forward thrusts, their backward draws,
 As clearly through the seasoned wood
 They send the golden dust like grain,
 Sown where the waving forest stood,
And ever like the drowsy wind,
Whose dreamy pathway it would find,
 I hear the swish of the driving plane!

Thus push the planes those brawny arms ;
Thus nimbly move those agile forms,
 As backward, forward, o'er and o'er,
 Their trumpets wind the old refrain,
 While spiral curls drop to the floor,
And pile it high with ringlets light,
Like woodland fairies in their flight
 Before the swish of the driving plane!

From pointed roof to cellar wall,
Its countless strokes continued fall
 Upon my eye, when cast around
 On altered scenes once and again,
 Where grace and comfort now abound,
To bid the weary wanderer come
And taste the tender sweets of home:
 How nobly works the driving plane!

I look abroad, and round and round,
O'er all the world that I have found,
 And see the varied works of men,
 Whose fickle lives must wax and wane ;
 They build but to rebuild, and then
'Twill be for an ambitious son
To do as his own sire has done :
 Again resounds the driving plane!

A SONG FROM THE PLOW

How gayly through the morning air
The plowboy plods along,
And drives his team, a dapple pair,
That listen to his song!

He cracks his whip in joyful glee,
As down the meadow lane
His team is walking merrily,
Yet needs no curbing rein.

The blackbird, too, has caught his song
In swaying on a bush,
And cheerily the notes prolong
In many a quavering gush.

The mild air full of gladness seems,
And all the trees and flowers
Have wakened from their nodding dreams
And solitary hours.

The dewy glebe, that now is broke,
Rolls from the passing share,
And meek-eyed daisies have awoke
To pay their tribute there.

As o'er the meadow field they pass,
In each successive round,
A bird flies from the tufted grass;
Her nest is on the ground.

She flies in terror to a stalk,
From stalk back to her nest,
And trembles at the heavy walk,
Nor knows what course is best.

The plowboy sees her quaking fright,
And hears her mother's cry;
He is no cruel, heartless wight;
A tear comes in his eye.

He stops to heed the fluttering bird,
And set her anguish free;
He takes her nest with kindly word,
And stalls it 'neath a tree.

Oh, happy is the soul of him
Who speaks a smiling word,
Or brings back from dark danger's brim
A little, trembling bird!

O noble Burns, it was thy thought,
When thou didst drive the plow,
That no wee creature stood for naught;
Thy soul, it liveth now!

The team moves on 'neath brighter skies,
With free, majestic grace;
The world reflects in purer eyes
An inward, outward peace.

The solemn hours that wont to move
With laggard pace behind,
Are now in zealous haste to prove
Their kinship with the wind!

The honest plowboy's guileless heart,
That thinks no one a wrong,
Whose simple life is nature's art,
Again breaks forth in song.

Oh, may that simple son of Ayr,
In spirit present now,
Guide every cleaving colter's share,
Ye warders of the plow!

APPLE BLOSSOMS

Down along the pasture lane,
Where the cows go one by one,
Skipped and tumbled Nell and Wayne
O'er the wall where Rove had gone,
Where the blooming apple trees
Shook their perfume on the breeze.

Mingled thus the buds and flowers
With the leaves of verdant hue,
In the early morning hours,
Glistening bright with drops of dew,
Seemed to the resplendent eye
Like a garden in the sky.

Long and loud the children laughed,
As the blossoms floated down,
On the vernal zephyrs waft,
Made the earth a floral crown;
Pink and white and red ones, too,
From the swaying branches blew.

How they played and romped and run!
Merry lad and happy lass,
Where the blossoms in the sun
Gleamed like snowflakes on the grass;
Rover, too, with joyous bound,
Barked along and spurned the ground.

Further down in thickest shade
Walked the farmer and his son;
Noted well whene'er they staid,
Trees which still the buds were on;
And it gladdened them to see
Promised fruit on every tree.

All around them in the sun,
'Mongst' the blossoms on the trees,
Chimed the never-ending tune
Of the busy honey bees,
Gathering in a precious store,
Such as never Hermes bore.

Double blessings are the bees,
As they wander 'mong the flowers,
Bearing pollen, like the breeze,
Far into the petaled bowers;
Fruit and nectar thus they bring,
Blessed workers on the wing.

Far and wide the orchard spread,
With its blossoms full and fair;
On and on the children sped,
Drinking in the balmy air;
None enjoying more than they
This, the fairest day in May.

GATHERING APPLES

FROM the barn and neighboring stall,
Ladder, basket, gathering-bag,
Took the farmer in the fall,
Led by Rove with knowing wag,
Wayne and Nellie, one and all,
Down along the orchard wall.

This was apple-gathering time,
And the farmer with his son
Sought them out, when in their prime,
Ere the pleasant days were done,
Ere November's cold and chill
Touched the apples' juicy fill.

Green and red the apples were,
Brown and golden, smooth and fair,
Striped and spotted here and there,
Large and juicy, ripe and rare;
Scarce in all the country round
Such an orchard could be found.

Famous were the orchards here,
Famous throughout every land;
None were like them, far or near;
Such a stock and such a brand!
Justly might the man be proud,
And his will he thus avowed:

“ Pick these apples, good men, all ;
 Handle each with special care ;
Bruise not one, nor let it fall,
 For when apples bruised are,
They'll not keep for winter's use,
When the storm clouds hold no truce.

“ I could wish that every man
 Had of these abundant store ;
We will spare whate'er we can,
 Still retaining for the poor ;
E'en in this broad, smiling land,
We must lend a helping hand.

“ When the wintry blasts blow chill,
 And I at my warm fireside
Feel exultant pleasure's thrill
 At the taste of these, my pride,
I shall feel rejoiced the more
When with me rejoice the poor.”

Then the men, ere winter's snows,
 Picked the apples, green and red ;
Piled them into long windrows
 Carefully, as he had said ;
For his men all served him well,
As their labor oft did tell.

Thus they gathered day on day ;
 Barreled all the apples sound ;

Dried all those they culled away;
 Scarcely one was left around;
So preserving all with care
From destructive forces there.

Oft the children's merry cry
 Sounded through the autumn days;
And the work went merrily,
 Cheered by youthful, careless ways,
Till fatigue and gloom were gone,
Till old age and youth were one.

THE ORCHARD IN WINTER

SIGHING, moaning, whistled the wind;
Snapping, cracking, creaked the trees;
Rolling, curling, flurried entwined
Rustling leaves in twos and threes,
As the timid rabbit fled
O'er the snow with fearful tread.

Clearly, brightly, shone the moon
Through a rifted bank of clouds,
Full orb'd as the sun at noon,
On the orchard clad in shrouds,
With its fingers, long and white,
Gleaming in the pallid light.

Slowly, drearily, passed the time,
Till, at last, one fell asleep,
Cold and numb with frost and rime,
Though its blood in rootlets deep;
Yet it dreamed of a bright clime,
Boys and girls and Christmastime.

Round a hemlock lighted gay,
Strung with candy, nuts and corn,
Children prattled at their play;
No one seemed to be forlorn,
For the old man's watchful care
Did provide for each one there.

Toys and gifts of varied sort,
Coats and shoes and books and cart,
Were occasion for their sport,
For this man of noble heart
Spent the happiest of his days
Showing children thrifty ways.

Then with merry joke and jest,
Spun the old man yarns of old,
Told of hunting in the West
Bison wild and bears and gold;
While they munched the apples red,
Listening all to what he said.

When the old man's tales were o'er,
Jingled up the horse and sleigh;
Took the children at the door;
And the moon blinked, in his way,
When the tree woke in a fright
At the children's warm, "Good-night."

